



Bursary Policy

| Reviewed | Date of Next Review | Responsibility |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| June 2025 | June 2026 | Head of Finance |

Our Mission:

'To enable young people to live and work without barriers'

Our Values:

- **Teamwork** – we hold ourselves and each other to account and are better when we work together
- **Compassion** – we act with trust, honesty and kindness in everything we do
- **Inclusion** – we treat each other fairly and with respect
- **Innovation** – we encourage thoughtful, creative and aspirational ideas
- **Pride** – we encourage each other to be proud of who we are and what we do

In September 2011 the Government introduced a Bursary Fund to provide support for students who face the greatest financial barriers to participation. This document is based on advice provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and sets out how the Fairfield Trust (FT) will administer and distribute the funds. It is divided into the following sections:

- 1 Eligibility
- 2 Applications and Assessment
- 3 Payments
- 4 Appeals
- 5 Fraud

FT recognises that offering financial support to some students requires sensitivity and respect for all those concerned. Information relating to applications will be treated in confidence.

1 Eligibility

Bursaries are intended to support those students who without financial support may not be able to access their course fully. There are two types of bursary available **Vulnerable** and **Discretionary**:

1.1. A **Vulnerable Bursary** of £1,200 per year will be payable to students aged under 19 at the end of the academic year in which the claim is made (namely 31st August). The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner
- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

1.2. FT may make **Discretionary Bursary** awards to students who are not eligible to claim a Vulnerable Bursary. It can be used to help them overcome the individual barriers to participation they face. This means to help with the cost of travel, to buy essential books, equipment or specialist clothing (such as protective overalls, for example). These are items the student would otherwise need to pay for in order to participate.

2. Applications and Assessment

The FT will make every effort to ensure that all those students entitled to bursaries receive such support. All students attending within the FT will receive information about bursaries. All students between the ages of 16 and 24, with learning disabilities, will be entitled to apply for a discretionary bursary if they consider that they fall into any of the groups described in section one and are publicly funded.

Students will be asked to provide evidence of their current eligibility.

All initial applications should be received by the Trust by the beginning of the autumn term in the year to which they apply. Students will be informed of the result of their applications by the end of October each year. Successful claimants will have the award backdated to the beginning of term.

If a student's circumstances change during the academic year a new or further application can be made. In this case successful applications can be backdated for up to a maximum of 28 days.

Students will be entitled to appeal against any decision taken by the FT. The appeals process is outlined in section 4 of this document.

3. **Payments**

If a **Vulnerable Bursary** is awarded payments are made directly to students on a half-termly basis in arrears, for the period that a student remains on their course and meets the following requirements for:

Attendance – Attend a minimum of 90% of timetabled sessions

Behaviour – Abide by the FT Codes of Behaviour

Should any student fail to meet these requirements the FT reserves the right to reduce bursary payments for the period in which course requirements have not been met. Similarly, if students leave College before the end of the academic year, they will no longer receive payments. Students entitled to bursaries joining courses later in the academic year will receive a pro-rata allocation.

If a **Discretionary Bursary** is awarded payments will generally be in kind. For example, covering the cost of the transport fee or purchasing equipment. In exceptional circumstances small cash awards can be made.

When payment is made direct to students, they must open a bank account as payments will be made from the College directly into their accounts. Any student faced with difficulties in opening a bank account should contact the Education Manager who will support them to open a current account at a local bank.

4. **Appeals**

Students are entitled to appeal against decisions made in relation to their application for a bursary or the withholding of payments. They should first raise their concerns with the Principal and if such a meeting fails to resolve any differences they should make a written complaint for consideration by the Chair of Trustees.

5. **Fraud**

Fraudulent claims for bursary allocations will be reported to the Police. Students found to make fraudulent claims will be required to refund all payments received.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kate Durrant
Head of Finance

June 2025